

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 07267 01 OF 03 211922Z

73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 NIC-01 EURE-00 /065 W

----- 044086

P R 211909Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7765

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAREUR

CINCUSAFE

CINCUSNAVEUR

USNMR SHAPE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 07267 01 OF 03 211922Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 07267

MILITARY ADDRESSEES ALSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, FR

SUBJECT: WHITHER THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY?

SUMMARY. THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF) IS CURRENTLY UNABLE TO FOLLOW THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS' ROUTE TO POWER. WHILE PROFESSING ITSELF ENCOURAGED BY RECENT EVENTS IN PORTUGAL, THE PCF REALIZES THAT IT DOES NOT CONTROL THE MEANS NECESSARY TO CREATE A SECOND PORTUGAL IN FRANCE. IT LACKS SIGNIFICANT PENETRATION OF THE ARMY. IT FACES STRONG OPPOSITION FROM WITHIN THE TRADE UNIONS. IT FACES A FRENCH PRESS LONG SUSPICIOUS OF THE COMMUNISTS. AND IT IS BEING OUTFLANKED BY A DYNAMIC AND GROWING SOCIALIST PARTY (PS). UNLIKE THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP), THE PCF HAS NOT HAD TO EMERGE FROM CLANDESTINITY. IT HAS BEEN ABLE TO EVOLVE BEYOND ITS STALINIST PAST AND APPEARS COMMITTED TO SEEKING POWER LEGITIMATELY THROUGH THE ELECTORAL PROCESS -- ALTHOUGH IT DOES NOT EXPECT TO TAKE POWER SOON.

OVER THE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM, THE PCF IS LIKELY TO PLAY A WAITING GAME, REMAINING ALIGNED IN THE UNION OF THE LEFT WITH THE PS AND THE LEFT RADICAL MOVEMENT (MRG). BUT FEELING ITS IDENTITY THREATENED BY ITS ALLIANCE WITH THE MORE BROADLY BASED AND INCREASINGLY STRONG PS AND THE LESS-THAN-MARXIST MRG, THE PCF FOR THE PAST FIVE MONTHS HAS FELT COMPELLED TO WAGE A POLEMIC AGAINST ITS UNITED LEFT PARTNERS. THIS HAS WEAKENED THE UNITED LEFT, AND CAUSED IT TO LOSE MUCH OF ITS CREDIBILITY AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE GISCARD GOVERNMENT. WE CAN EXPECT THE PCF TO SEEK TO EXPLOIT ALL VISIBLE SIGNS OF UNREST, BE THEY IN THE PLANTS, ARMY BARRACKS OR AMONG STUDENTS; ABOVE ALL THE PCF WILL FOCUS ON FRANCE'S ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, ESPECIALLY THE RISING UNEMPLOYMENT RATE. BUT WITH LESS THAN ONE-FIFTH OF FRANCE'S

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 07267 01 OF 03 211922Z

ELECTORAL POWER, THE PCF FOR THE TIME BEING IS RELEGATED TO ITS TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION ROLE. END SUMMARY.

1. PCF TACTICS. WITH SUBSTANTIAL CONTROL OF A PORTION OF THE TRADE-UNION MOVEMENT THROUGH THE CGT AND A HIGHLY DISCIPLINED MILITANT TRADITION, THE PCF HAS NEVERTHELESS FAILED TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT HEADWAY IN

APPEALING TO THE MASS OF NON-COMMUNIST WORKERS. NEITHER HAS IT SUCCEEDED IN POLITICIZING THE ARMY. IT HAS BEEN ONLY SLIGHTLY MORE SUCCESSFUL IN PORTRAYING THE PS AS A "SOFT" SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY. THE PCF RANK AND FILE, ESPECIALLY THE NEW RECRUITS, IS OFTEN CONFUSED BY THE PARTY'S ATTEMPTS TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN ITS IDEOLOGICAL GOAL -- THE PCF AS THE UNIQUE REVOLUTIONARY VOICE OF THE FRENCH WORKING CLASS -- AND ITS PARLIAMENTARY OBJECTIVES, WHICH IMPLY AN APPEAL TO A WIDER AUDIENCE EASILY ALARMED BY THE RHETORIC OF CLASS STRUGGLE. IN THE ABSENCE OF AN IMMEDIATE ELECTORAL TEST, THE PCF FEELS IT CAN AFFORD TO GIVE PRIORITY TO IDEOLOGICAL PURITY AND RIGOR RATHER THAN TO AN ELECTORAL APPEAL TO THE MIDDLE CLASSES.

2. PCF 17 PERCENT; PS UP TO 35. IN PURSUIT OF ITS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 07267 02 OF 03 211927Z

73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 NIC-01 EURE-00 /065 W

----- 044137

P R 211909Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7766

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
USMISSION NATO  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS  
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
AMCONSUL LYON  
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE  
AMCONSUL NICE  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG  
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE  
USCINCEUR  
CINCUSAREUR  
CINCUSAFE  
CINCUSNAVEUR  
USNMR SHAPE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 07267 02 OF 03 211927Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 PARIS 07267

IDEOLOGICAL GOALS, THE PCF HAS CONDUCTED SINCE LAST OCTOBER AN ATTACK ON THE PS, ITS MAJOR PARTNER IN THE UNION OF THE LEFT. THE CAMPAIGN HAS IN TURN AMUSED, BORED AND ALARMED THE FRENCH, WHO HAVE COME TO SEE IN THIS INCREASINGLY STERILE POLEMIC A RETURN TO THE INEFFECTUAL, PERPETUALLY BICKERING LEFT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC. A SINGLE FIGURE REVEALS THE DEPTH OF PCF CONCERN: IF NATIONAL ELECTIONS WERE HELD TODAY, POLLS GIVE THE COMMUNISTS ONLY 17 PERCENT OF THE VOTE -- LOWEST SINCE 1958 -- IN CONTRAST TO THE AVERAGE 22 PERCENT THEY HAVE RECEIVED IN ELECTIONS SINCE 1945. THE REJUVENATED, FAST-GROWING SOCIALISTS, ON THE CONTRARY, WOULD TAKE OVER 30 PERCENT, WITH SOME POLLS SHOWING AS HIGH AS 35. (THE FRENCH ELECTORAL DEMOGRAPHY IS SUCH, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN WITH THE HIGHEST PS PERCENTAGE ESTIMATES, THE UNITED LEFT WOULD STILL FALL CONSIDERABLY SHORT OF AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.)

3. PCF READINGS OF THE PORTUGUESE EXPERIENCE. EACH NEW TACTICAL SUCCESS BY THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS IS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD TO THE PCF. CONSTRAINED BY DOCTRINE TO APPLAUD THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS' EFFORTS, THE PCF NEVERTHELESS REALIZES THAT THE FRENCH ARE PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO PCP DISPLAYS OF AUTHORITARIANISM WHICH HAVE RECEIVED PROMINENT PRESS COVERAGE HERE.

SOME OBSERVERS FEEL THAT FRENCHMEN WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE SUPPORT THE UNITED LEFT AS A CREDIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE GISCARD GOVERNMENT ARE BECOMING ALIENATED BY EVENTS IN PORTUGAL, AND ARE COMING TO VIEW THE UNITED LEFT THROUGH NEWLY-FOCUSED ANTI-COMMUNIST LENSES. THE PCF HAS THUS CONFINED ITS EXPRESSIONS OF APPROVAL TO COLUMNS IN L'HUMANITE, BUT HAS TENDED TO AVOID THE PORTUGUESE ISSUE IN ITS POLITICAL SPEECHES.

4. UNITED LEFT WILL HOLD TOGETHER. OVER THE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM, THE PCF WILL PROBABLY CHOOSE TO REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 07267 02 OF 03 211927Z

WITHIN THE UNION OF THE LEFT -- IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN BECAUSE IT CAN ILL AFFORD TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR A BREAK. THE PCF WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO EXERCISE ITS VITUPERATIVE TALENTS ON THE PS FOR SOME TIME TO COME, WHILE STRESSING A NEED TO REBUILD THE PCF'S REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST IMAGE. BUT TOWARD THE END OF 1976 THE PCF CAN BE EXPECTED TO DRAW CLOSER, IF NOT TO CLOSE RANKS ENTIRELY, WITH ITS SOCIALIST ALLIES IN PREPARATION FOR A MAJOR EFFORT AT CONTROLLING MORE CITIES THROUGH JOINT UNITED LEFT CANDIDACIES IN THE 1977 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. THERE THE PCF WILL HOPE TO USE THE MORE MODERATE PARTIES -- THE PS AND THE MRG -- TO OFFSET ITS OWN HARDLINE IMAGE.

5. PCF BREAK OF THE UNITED LEFT IS UNLIKELY. SOME OBSERVERS ARGUE THAT THE PCF MIGHT WISH TO BREAK WITH THE UNION OF THE LEFT AND RETURN TO THE DESERT WHICH IT TRAVERSED SO LONG. WHILE A BREAK CANNOT BE ENTIRELY EXCLUDED, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY IN THE SHORT RUN SINCE THE DISSOLUTION OF THE UNITED LEFT WOULD EFFECTIVELY END THE POSSIBILITY -- SMALL IN ANY CASE -- OF THE LEFT'S GAINING AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR 1978.

6. PCF LEADERSHIP. ANOTHER FACTOR OPERATING AGAINST A UNITED LEFT BREAKUP IS THE RETURN TO ACTIVITY, AFTER A TWO-MONTH CONVALESCENCE, OF PCF SECRETARY GENERAL GEORGES MARCHAIS. GENERALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE ORIGINAL PCF IMPETUS FOR THE UNITED LEFT, MARCHAIS HAS APPEARED AS THE PCF LEADER MOST DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH THE COMMON PROGRAM. HIS ATTACKS ON THE PS, WHILE NO Milder THAN THOSE MADE BY REPUTED PCF HARDLINERS ROLAND LEROY AND JEAN KANAPA, ARE CONSISTENTLY CAST IN TERMS OF ALLEGED PS PERFIDY CONCERNING THE COMMON PROGRAM. AS ONE SOCIALIST DEPUTY PUT IT: "MARCHAIS USES THE COMMON PROGRAM LIKE A SWORD WITH WHICH TO

SMITE HIS ENEMIES; THE OTHER PCF LEADERS REFER TO IT  
MECHANICALLY AS A CREDO." AT ANY RATE, MARCHAIS HAS A  
GREATER PERSONAL STAKE IN THE UNITED LEFT THAN ANY  
OTHER PCF LEADER. THE DEBATE BEING PLAYED OUT IN THE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PARIS 07267 02 OF 03 211927Z

PCF LEADERSHIP APPEARS TO REFLECT A STRUGGLE TO FIND  
AN EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN THE ELECTORALISM WHICH MARCHAIS  
HAS LONG FOUGHT FOR, AND THE COMBINATION OF IDEOLOGICAL  
PURITY AND REVOLUTIONARY FERVOR REPRESENTED BY THE  
HARDLINERS.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 07267 03 OF 03 211927Z

73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 NIC-01 EURE-00 /065 W

----- 044262

P R 211909Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7767

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
USMISSION NATO  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS  
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
AMCONSUL LYON  
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE  
AMCONSUL NICE  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG  
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE  
USCINCEUR  
CINCUSAREUR  
CINCUSAFE  
CINCUSNAVEUR  
USNMR SHAPE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 07267 03 OF 03 211927Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 PARIS 07267

7. PCF'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE. THE PCF WILL CERTAINLY STEP UP ITS ATTACKS ON THE GOF AND CONTINUE WITH INCREASED VITUPERATION TO PORTRAY THE GISCARD ADMINISTRATION AS RESPONSIBLE FOR FRANCE'S ECONOMIC WOES, ESPECIALLY THE RISING UNEMPLOYMENT RATE. LIKELY PCF TACTICS WILL CONCENTRATE ON EXPLOITATION OF SIGNS OF UNREST IN PLANTS, ARMY BARRACKS AND AMONG STUDENTS. THE PCF WILL ALSO ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT THE CURRENT MALAISE IN THE FRENCH ARMY (PARIS A-125). HOWEVER, THE COMMUNISTS WILL HAVE TO DEAL GINGERLY WITH THIS TEMPTATION. TO TAKE AN OVERTLY ANTI-MILITARY STANCE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME DEMANDING THAT FRANCE REMAIN INDEPENDENT OF NATO IS TO APPEAR TO STRIP FRANCE' A COUNTRY WHICH DEMANDS NATIONALISTIC RHETORIC OF ITS LEGITIMATE POLITICAL PARTIES, OF ITS DEFENSES. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL SEEK TO PUBLICIZE ANTI-MILITARY ACTIONS AND MAY POSE EMBARRASSING QUESTIONS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DURING THE SPRING SESSION WHICH BEGINS APRIL 2. OTHER OBVIOUS TARGETS INCLUDE GOF PROPOSALS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND BUSINESS ENTERPRISE REFORMS.

8. NO MORE THAN AN OPPOSITION ROLE. MANY OF THE PCF'S PROPOSED SOLUTIONS WILL BE DEMAGOGIC AND DESIGNED PRIMARILY FOR INTERNAL CONSUMPTION AND THE EDUCATION OF NEW RECRUITS; A FEW WILL BECOME THEMES ON WHICH THE

UNITED LEFT WILL ELABORATE IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.  
BUT REGARDLESS OF THE ISSUES WHICH IT CHOOSES TO  
EXPLOIT, REGARDLESS OF ITS INTERNAL DILEMMAS, THE PCF  
IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO HOLD NO MORE THAN AROUND ONE-  
FIFTH OF THE ELECTORAL POWER IN FRANCE -- AND FOR THE  
TIME BEING, THAT IS NOT ENOUGH TO ALLOW IT TO PLAY  
MORE THAN ITS TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION ROLE.  
RUSH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN



## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL SITUATION, OPPOSITION PARTIES, LABOR UNIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 21 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975PARIS07267  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750100-0048  
**From:** PARIS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750327/aaaaayia.tel  
**Line Count:** 392  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 8  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 15 APR 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <15 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <22 SEP 2003 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** WHITHER THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY? SUMMARY. THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF) IS CURRENTLY  
**TAGS:** PINT, FR, PCF  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006